

January 7, 1963

Dr. John Z. Bowers
c/o Dean Horii
Kyoto University Medical School
Kyoto, Japan

Dear John:

Esther and I were very pleased to hear your cheerful and busy messages and are happy that you are settling in so well in Kyoto. Our best wishes to Imogene and yourself for the remainder of your visit.

I would like to impose on you for a very considerable favor, but only on the basis that you can manage it without taking too much of your time and effort. Please let me know if there is any aspect of this that you would prefer not to undertake, as I could very readily understand it. What I would like to ask of you is a bit of scouting on a member of the staff at Kyoto with whom I have had some correspondence, but have not met, Dr. Junichi Nomura, in the Department of Neuropsychiatry. Nomura was recommended to me by Dr. Osamu Hayaishi in the Biochemistry Department, who is a frequent visitor at the NIH and whom I do know slightly. We are starting a new program in neurobiochemistry in our department. About eighteen months hence Dr. Eric Shooter is returning from the Biochemistry Department at the University of London to take up a position here to take charge of this line of research. Meantime, however, I have gotten a laboratory started in hopes of gaining more time on the problem and have only just -- after considerable exasperation! -- gotten NIH support grant support, after some delay, to underwrite the work. Some while ago when I was in a more exuberant mood, I made some tentative commitments about having Nomura come over for a year or two to help get us going on this program even before Shooter arrived. However, I have spent ~~some~~ much of my energy in an unanticipated way in getting this organized that I am inclined to be rather more cautious than before about undertaking the responsibility of overlooking the work, and it is for this reason that I would like to ask you to somehow arrange to interview Nomura and give me your impressions of him. I have no special concern about his technical qualifications, on which I can rely entirely on Hayaishi's reference, but I would be very much interested to have your impressions about Nomura's personal character, with special emphasis on how easy it would be to communicate with him and how well he would fit into a laboratory in a U.S. Medical School where I would not be able to spend more than a few hours a week in looking over his work. Frankly, and I trust you will not make a point of broadcasting this, one of the principal motives in continuing to try to get him here is that Dave Hamburg, who heads our Psychiatry Department, is in fact assiduously looking for people with the general kind of training that

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Nomura represents for staffing his own department, so that one of the general judgments I would like to get your opinion about is how well Nomura, with a year or two of additional experience, would be likely to make out as a member of a medical school faculty here. I realize there will of course be other complications, but these are another matter.

I just do not know whom else I can ask who would be able to react within a fairly short time in dealing with this problem, and there is some urgency about it, especially from Nomura's own standpoint. So anything you could do along this line with some discretion would be very much appreciated.

With best wishes for the New Year,

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics